

Emergency Meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee

Thursday, May 30, 2013, 6:00 AM

School Administration Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room

286 Main Street, Pawtucket RI 02860

Minutes

I Meeting will come to order

The Chairman, Mr. Tenreiro, called the meeting to order at 6:06 AM.

a. Roll call

Mr. Coughlin-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Spooner-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here

Also in attendance were Mrs. Deborah Cylke, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Thomas Conlon, Business Administrator; Mr. Dennis Rebelo, Interim Director of Maintenance; Mr. Steve Tucker, Project Manager, Edward Rowse Architects and Glenn Ahlborg, Director of Project Development and Estimating, Ahlborg Construction Corporation.

Ms. Cano arrived at 6:15 AM.

Mr. Araujo and Ms. Bonollo were not in attendance.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II New Business

a. Emergency Meeting Approval

Mr. Spooner moved to approve the emergency meeting of Thursday, May 30, 2013 at 6:00 AM. Mr. Coughlin seconded.

Voice vote carried five in favor.

b. Approve Waiver of Make Up days for Potter Burns Students

Mrs. Cylke commented that an official request had been submitted to the Commissioner of Education for a waiver for the students at Potter Burns to make up four additional days due to the ceiling issues. If they have to make up these days it would put them in school through July.

Mr. Spooner moved to approve waiver to make up days at Potter Burns and Greene and any other school deemed necessary. Ms. Nordquist seconded.

Mr. Spooner: Will there be any ramifications?

Mrs. Cylke: The Commissioner has the authority to waive up to ten days for a total of 170 days. We're in school until June 26th. That would bring us to the first week in July.

Mr. Coughlin: We're waiving any rights at Greene and any other school?

Mrs. Cylke: Yes.

Voice vote carried five in favor.

c. Approve Ceiling Repairs—Potter Burns and Nathanael Greene

Mr. Spooner moved to approve ceiling repairs. Mr. Coughlin seconded.

Mrs. Cylke commented that the contractors were halfway done through inspecting the schools that were similar to Potter and Greene.

Mr. Spooner: I believe in the safety of a child. We should do it.

Mr. Coughlin: We are going to have a new contract?

Mrs. Cylke: It was bid in a way that was very easy. It was based on per classroom. My hope is that there are no further problems.

Steve Tucker from Rowse Architects is really representing you. We are investigating plaster over gypsum ceiling system that gave way over at Potter Burns.

Mr. Conlon: No contract written yet. It was written per square foot.

Mr. Coughlin: It's elastic enough so we could cover every school?

Mr. Spooner: I would really hope you people are smart enough to due diligence in it's not the same problem. We would have to come back and discuss it. I'm not going to risk a child's life.

Mr. Coughlin: Explain the bids and process.

Mr. Tucker distributed a booklet with timeline of work and what insurance company did.

1. Initial assessment

2. Rhode Island Analytical was contacted for asbestos testing; results were negative.

3. Prepared bid documents that were given to contractors

4. Bid results in order from lowest to highest; Ahlborg was the lowest at \$179,000. We asked for all types of construction on bid documents.

Mrs. Cylke: There was a \$40,000 difference between the low bid and the next low bid.

Mr. Tucker: It was a holiday weekend getting contractors and prevailing wages. The lowest bid unit price is considerably lower which is good moving forward.

City authorization—we had good communication with David Clemente, the Purchasing Director. The City was involved in the whole process.

Mr. Tucker showed pictures of Potter Burns and commented that he believes there was an excessive amount of moisture that builds up in the building. It was a substantial system. Plaster absorbs moisture and weighs quite a bit. Ceilings are inaccessible. Separation is difficult in quantifying ceiling detachment.

Any signs of failure and we're taking it out. It is cheaper to do stabilization.

Mr. Coughlin: When you say moisture is the culprit?

Mr. Tucker: You have steam systems when the buildings were built. Fresh air systems are not working. Buildings that are very humid in the winter we are finding the fresh air systems are not working in the spring.

Ms. Nordquist: Are you finding any mold?

Mr. Tucker: No.

We looked at Slater, they are in good shape, but we may have to do some strapping.

Greene has many drop ceilings. When you look above the drop ceiling, it has already dropped and is being held up by conduit and bars. Steam is saturating the ceiling. Humidity is trapped in the building, especially during the winter. You are not opening the windows during the winter.

This system worked for the era the buildings were built.

Mr. Coughlin: I received a call from a Tolman parent. Are they closing the gym at Tolman?

Mr. Tucker: At Goff we found in the gym the ceiling was sagging as a result, we closed the gym at Goff.

Ms. Cano: This is an ongoing problem. Would you anticipate this going on in the future and what type of maintenance do we have to do to maintain our buildings?

Mr. Tucker: Right now it's a stabilizing project. My suggestion would be to go in and replace the ceilings.

At Greene the problem was concealed by drop ceilings.

Mr. Spooner: At Goff, enclosed by decorative plaster?

Mr. Tucker: It might be able to just be removed. Inspections are being done after school hours. We are scheduled at 2:30 PM at Shea and from there to Tolman.

Mr. Spooner: There is no imminent danger to staff and children?

Mrs. Cylke: Dennis is familiar with the schools. From the beginning we're going to do Greene. At Tolman there is a plastic bag covering the ventilation. No, I don't believe there is imminent danger to staff and students.

They need access without the students.

Mr. Rebelo: We cannot guarantee anything.

Mr. Tucker: We're finding a different system at Shea. It's called a Chicago system which is very stable. We are hoping to find the same at Tolman.

Mr. Coughlin: The cracked ceiling at Greene—has that been like that for how long?

Mr. Tucker: Six months. At Potter Burns in measuring ceiling, you could see a "wave" in the ceiling. When hatchet taken to the ceiling, we found mesh system at Potter Burns.

There are a lot of stress fractures.

Abatement costs are not included.

Asbestos was found in the ceiling tile in the principal's office at Greene. Two tests were done. One was positive, one was negative.

Mr. Coughlin: Do we have a timeline?

Mr. Tucker: We have to do asbestos abatement at the principal's

office.

Mr. Tenreiro: If you find asbestos, what is the next process?

Mr. Tucker: The ceiling failed. They have to close out the room, topping out ceiling tile and cleaning out the room.

Mr. Tenreiro: Part of the visual display, did it include any school with a drop ceiling?

Mr. Rebelo: Curtis and Varieur have drop ceilings. Any of the newer schools have a drop ceiling.

Mr. Spooner moved to amend motion to include approve ceiling repairs as needed based on current similar conditions on room to room basis. **Mr. Coughlin** seconded.

Voice vote carried five in favor.

III Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Cylke commented that she will keep the School Committee updated as she receives new findings.

The purpose of the 6:00 AM meeting was to start working at 7:00 AM with this work with **Mr. Ahlborg** and **Mr. Tucker**.

The facilities subcommittee estimated \$150M to bring our schools to 90%.

I think with this new information, we need to be sure our priorities are in place.

We will not have students and staff return to school until we know schools are safe. We'll have them all tested. When the ceiling detached at Potter Burns, clearly there was no structural damage. This was a detachment with no structural damage. It was not a collapse.

When this is over, we are going to debrief with building inspectors, etc. and create some standard operating procedures.

Pawtucket is gearing up for 2014 Bond. Moratorium on building will be lifted in July, 2014. Pawtucket took advantage of health and safety bond. I want to explore that.

I want to mention the job description of the operations officer and the potential to consolidate. We need to re-visit that and still continue to meet and discuss that.

That small ceiling detachment is a blessing in disguise.

IV Adjournment

Mr. Spooner moved to adjourn. Ms. Nordquist seconded.

Voice vote carried five in favor.

The Chairman, Mr. Tenreiro, adjourned the emergency meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee at 6:55 AM on Thursday, May 30, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Clerk

Approved 9/10/13